U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY www.cma.army.mil

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CMA PROGRESS AT A GLANCE

as of January 19, 2010:

— Anniston Chemical Activity, Ala.: Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ANCDF) and Anniston Chemical Activity employees successfully completed a series of maintenance activities last month during a scheduled stoppage of chemical munitions disposal operations. When operations resumed, ANCDF control room operators began using newly installed and tested Burster Well Punch Stations. Since some of the old mustard-filled mortars cannot be easily drained, the punch stations are being used to push the burster well deeper into the mortar to create an opening near the top of the mortar shell. The opening allows for the safe processing of the undrained mortars in the ANCDF Metal Parts Furnace (MPF). By using the Burster Well Punch Stations, operators will be able to continue the safe, efficient and timely disposal of the remaining chemical munitions stockpile at Anniston Army Depot.

— Deseret Chemical Depot, Utah: Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (TOCDF) workers resumed processing mustard agent-filled 4.2-inch mortars, with the new carbon filtration system up and running smoothly. During the initial start of the 4.2-inch mortar campaign, TOCDF officials suspended processing when workers identified unexpected, but low levels of mercury in the exhaust gases of the MPF. Since halting mortar operations, the new filter system, designed to capture mercury from furnace exhaust gases, has successfully completed full-scale performance demonstration tests for Utah state regulatory officials.

— Newport Chemical Depot, Ind.: Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility workers continue closure activities. On Jan. 11, Newport Chemical Depot (NECD) received a letter from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management stating that total closure as required by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) had been completed. The active portion of the RCRA permit has been in place since December 1999. This achievement brings NECD closer to closure and the transfer of property in accordance with Base Realignment and Closure Act requirements.

— Pine Bluff Chemical Activity, Ark.: Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (PBCDF) received approval from the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality on a Class 1 Permit Modification Request. PBCDF is now authorized to change from the restricted 75 percent feed rates to the maximum 100 percent feed rates for both the Liquid Incinerator and the MPF. PBCDF paused processing to adjust set points for the furnaces to the new feed rates, and then began processing at 100 percent. On Monday, Jan. 11, the subcontractor completed demolition of the former BZ facility at the PBCDF site.

— Umatilla Chemical Depot, Ore.: Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) submitted to regulators on Dec. 23, 2009, a supplemental package to its existing Agent Trial Burn Plan. The supplement was submitted to address carbon monoxide emission requirements related to "boilovers" of the contents of ton containers while in the MPF. On Jan. 15, the UMCDF surpassed 6 million man hours without a lost time accident. The facility's last lost time injury occurred in July 2006.

Umatilla Closes First Igloo Storage Facility

As the Umatilla Chemical Depot (UMCD) looks toward completion of its mission and closure, the first of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permitted chemical weapons agent storage areas have been approved for closure. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality has granted approval for the closure of I-block storage facility at UMCD.

I-Block was the first storage facility to be closed at UMCD. It contained 30 hazardous waste chemical agent storage units, also known as igloos. These igloos housed mustard ton containers from 2001 to 2006, when they were safely consolidated into UMCD's remaining Chemical Limited Area.

"Teamwork along with a focus on safety and protection of the environment facilitated this major accomplishment for the depot in its progress toward closure. The planning and proven methods used to close I-Block will form the backbone for eventual closure of the Chemical Limited Area," said Lt. Col. Kris Perkins, UMCD commander.

An example of a storage igloo.

Closure of the storage area was effective Dec. 7, 2009, after three years of closure planning under UMCD's Hazardous Waste Storage Permit. In all, UMCD has 1,001 storage igloos in 11 blocks, designated as A through K. Most of the igloos were used for conventional ammunition, but have since been emptied as UMCD prepares for closure under the federal Base Realignment and Closure program.

PBCDF achieves 50 percent Completion in Final Campaign

Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (PBCDF) rang in the New Year by surpassing the halfway completion mark of their third and final campaign. The arsenal's major achievement was reached nearly a year ahead of schedule and the personnel are confident that they will meet the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty date of April 29, 2012.

"Currently we are operating ahead of schedule. The early completion estimate in the Transition Planning Guide predicts the end of the ton container disposal campaign to be in December 2010," said Mark Greer, PBCDF site project manager. The PBCDF began disposal operations in March 2005, and the final campaign, which was expected to last three years, began in December 2008.

Unlike the previous disposal campaigns that dealt with nerve agent, the current campaign destroys mustard, a blister agent. Once all of the mustard is destroyed, the facility will begin closure.

February is American Heart Month

February was first declared American Heart Month in 1963 by President John F. Kennedy. Since that time, coronary heart disease has grown to be the number one cause of death in the United States, with strokes following as the third leading cause of death. Keeping our hearts healthy and safe is important and now is a great time to evaluate overall health plans. Do you make time for daily exercise, eat heart-healthy foods, manage your weight and live an overall healthy lifestyle? These life-saving activities will go a long way in keeping your heart in tip-top shape. Don't become part of the statistic – more than 70 million Americans have one or more forms of cardiovascular disease – *take care of your heart and it will take care of you.*

Finding "Chemical Weapons Disposal" Online

Have you ever tried to search for, "chemical weapons disposal" to see what appears? If you haven't, you may be surprised at what you will find. Of course you will spot the expected search results such as a link to CMA's public Web site and recent and old news coverage of the program, however, you may also view links to a description of CMA on Wikipedia. Try the same search in YouTube and you will discover a number of videos depicting the flora and fauna of Johnston Island, a *History Channel* documentary on U.S. chemical weapons disposal and even a few *AMC News Dispatch* reports on CMA.

Today, CMA's operations, challenges and milestones are covered by both traditional and non-traditional media. Non-traditional media comprise online blogs such as the Armchair Generalist and microblogs such as Twitter. Similarly, social networking site members read and post information on Web sites such as YouTube and Flickr.

Participation in online social networking has exploded during the past five years. These networking sites are web-based communities of individuals who share interests, political views or activities. Members communicate with one another through a variety of networks and devices such as cell phones, BlackBerries® and computers. According to the International Association of Business Communicators more than half of all Internet users have joined a social network. Technorati, a leading blog search engine, says that in 2008 there were 23 million bloggers and 94 million blog readers in the U.S. alone.

The Army launched its official blog portal, Army Live, and a fan page on Facebook in April, 2009. In keeping with its communication goals, CMA maintains a Wikipedia page as well as actively posts program news and accomplishments to YouTube, iReport and Flickr through pre-established accounts maintained by the U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC.)

Interest in postings about the U.S. chemical weapons disposal program varies by site and topic. For example, CMA's Wikipedia page receives on average 165 visits per month. On the other hand, a page dedicated to the Umatilla Chemical Depot written by a Wikipedia contributor receives on average 862 visits per month. The Wikipedia entry on sulfur mustard, which includes a detailed section on the Agency's role with its destruction significantly outperforms these entries, receiving approximately 13,400 visits per month. And how about those bloggers? According to Statcounter.com, the Armchair Generalist, who often writes about the U.S. disposal program, receives more than 13,000 unique visitors per month.

"We understand the impact social media has had on the way the public receives and shares information," says Greg Mahall, CMA Public Affairs Chief. "While we still leverage traditional means to communicate with stakeholders, such as our public Web site and a good old fashioned phone call every now and again, we have established a presence online that we will maintain. We do this to manage our reputation and make it easy for stakeholders to learn about our program."

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency landmine destruction video on YouTube.

CAMDS Closure Plan Approved

After nine months of planning, the Chemical Agent Munitions Disposal System (CAMDS) closure team and the Utah Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste (DSHW) have completed negotiations for the final CAMDS closure plan, which was approved Dec. 24, 2009. The closure plan provides the "rule book" needed to close the CAMDS facility and satisfy Resource Conservation and Recovery Act closure requirements.

Decommissioning Work Packages (DWPs) will be required for each individual building. The DWPs provide the details necessary to proceed with closure activities that must be completed before each building is demolished. The first DWP for the CAMDS Chemical Treatment Facility has been submitted to the DSHW.

Aerial shot of CAMDS facility.

End of BZ Demolition

The former site of the BZ Chemical Disposal Facility at Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility where demolition was recently completed.

Photo courtesy of Washington Demilitarization Company.

CMA News is produced by the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency Public Affairs Office.
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